



## Études photographiques

27 | mai 2011

Images de guerre, photographies mises en page

---

# Sampling Chaos

Aby Warburg and the Photographic Atlas of the Great War

**Georges Didi-Huberman**

Translator: Shane Lillis



### Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/3463>

ISSN: 1777-5302

### Publisher

Société française de photographie

### Printed version

Date of publication: 15 May 2011

ISBN: 9782911961274

ISSN: 1270-9050

### Electronic reference

Georges Didi-Huberman, « Sampling Chaos », *Études photographiques* [Online], 27 | mai 2011, Online since 04 June 2014, connection on 01 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/etudesphotographiques/3463>

---

This text was automatically generated on 1 May 2019.

Propriété intellectuelle

---

# Sampling Chaos

Aby Warburg and the Photographic Atlas of the Great War

Georges Didi-Huberman

Translation : Shane Lillis

---

## Disparates of the World, Caprices of the Soul, and Disasters of History

- 1 We could legitimately see the *Mnemosyne Atlas* of Aby Warburg as a tool for gathering, or for ‘sampling,’ by means of interposed images, the great chaos of history. It would be a matter of creating, through the atlas’s black *plates* studded with figures of all kinds, *planes* of an intelligibility capable of creating certain ‘sections of chaos’ in order to create a kind of archaeology or ‘cultural geology’ that would aim to make sensible the historical immanence of images. And like a rebound or a ricochet, it would be a matter of causing new concepts and new ways of thinking about social and cultural temporality to burst forth. I use the words of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to index, once again, the philosophical power and audaciousness – that ‘superior empiricism’ – of Warburg’s project: ‘It is always a matter of defeating chaos by a secant plane that crosses it,’ they wrote, adding that ‘it is as if one were casting a net, but the fisherman always risks being swept away and finding himself in the open sea.’<sup>1</sup> This is a way of repeating the inherent *power* and *suffering* in Warburg’s gesture: his vocation for the *astra* (concepts) always brought back to the proximity of the *monstra* (chaos). On their turning point, or rather through both of these, we find the operating ‘section plates’ that the *Mnemosyne Atlas*’s piercing collection offers us.
- 2 Caught in the pincers between his philosophical ambition, which is never formulated to its culmination – forging a *Kulturwissenschaft* in order to reforge a whole historical discipline of every human science – and the intrinsic modesty of his attention to singular cases, to the details of philological erudition, Warburg’s project can really only be understood through what it aims for, without ever grasping it or fully constructing it. The *Mnemosyne Atlas* stands between two horizons that its author evoked or invoked, without ever, or almost never, naming them. Further up the line, we find the horizon of the

Enlightenment and its romantic turning point: it is Goya, or Baudelaire speaking about Goya from the angle of a 'sampling of chaos';<sup>2</sup> and it is Goethe, finally, whose notion of affinity opened up so many ways to rethink the practices of observing, anthologizing, cross-checking, collecting, of the atlas. Further down the line, among Warburg's contemporaries who were – more or less – unknown to him, we have for example, August Sander with his atlas *Face of Our Time*,<sup>3</sup> Walter Benjamin for his 'dialectical images,' or Sigmund Freud for his magisterial way of envisaging the power of the *monstra*. All of these – and still others in that period – made sections of chaos, *visual sections* like so many 'planes of consistency' where the temporal immanence is exhibited, albeit enigmatically, on each plate of the *Mnemosyne Atlas*.

- 3 To sample chaos, to make sections to retrieve from it – as though with a fisherman's net or like the exhumation undertaken by an archaeologist – packets of images, and to make all of this visible on planes or on *plates of visual consistency*: this is what can be understood according to three ways that Francisco Goya inscribed, by means of his admirable series of engravings, on the pediment of our entire modernity: *Disparates*, *Caprichos*, *Desastres*. The *Disparates* are a way of naming the art of sampling the 'dispar,' the chaos in space: Warburg undoubtedly does this – including in the atlas's playful dimension, its *Witz* dimension – when he dares to bring together on the same plate a sarcophagus and an aerial photograph, a dancing nymph and a dying old man, a small bronze coin and a triumphal arc, a bust of a child and a *southern* arranged for sacrifices, a biblical scene and an anatomy lesson, the monument to Hindenburg, and an advertisement for toilet paper.<sup>4</sup> And here, no doubt, it has to do with *knowledge through montages*, with that non standard knowledge that was recommended – practiced and theorized – in the same period by Walter Benjamin in his *Arcades* or by Georges Bataille in his journal *Documents*.<sup>5</sup>
- 4 The *Mnemosyne Atlas*, secondly, could be leafed through as a collection of *Caprichos*, explicitly presented as an art of sampling the chaos in the *psyche* or in collective imaginations. There are almost as many 'monsters of reason' in Warburg's atlas as there are in Goya's series: fearsome divinities of the ancient oriental religions, titanomachias and psychomachias, feminine creatures with several breasts, monstrous serpents, hybrid creatures of the zodiac, deformed beings dancing together, cruel and proliferating metamorphoses, sadistic eroticism, dizzying falls, grotesque heads, and, everywhere, those multiform personifications of the nightmare of reason.<sup>6</sup> Did Walter Benjamin not also find that the work of the surrealists took the *monstra* very seriously, and that they sought, in their own way – and in the same period – to make out the improbable inventory of the movements of the soul inscribed in the very movements of desire and of the body?<sup>7</sup> The theoretical lesson common to these authors, who are nonetheless so different from one another, is no doubt that all knowledge of the disparate brings into play the very structure – and the montage character – of the images of thought.
- 5 We finally discover that the *Mnemosyne Atlas* works like a collection of *Desastres*: the play of the *astra* and the *monstra* takes account of the cruelest and most violent aspects of human history. The samples of spatial – or figural – chaos bear witness to a psychic chaos that is itself an integral part of its historical or political incarnations. For knowledge – through re-montage – always engages a reflection on the *de-montage of time* in the tragic history of society. And this can be seen directly in the last plates of *Mnemosyne* where Warburg arranged the contemporary photographic documents of the Lateran Accords, passed between the dictator Mussolini and Pope Pius XI.<sup>8</sup> Of course, in these montages, it is a question of *cultural survivals*: they operate like transversal sections in the long

duration of the relations between power and image (for example, the throne of Saint Peter visible in plate 79 subtly refers to the effigy of the sovereign already visible in plate 1), but also in the long duration of the theologico-political paradigm (the Eucharist, which is the principle theme of plate 79, refers also, in its own way, to the divinatory livers in plate 1: the mysterious and mystical supports of belief and of power).

## 'Dislocation of the World' and 'Tragedy of Culture'

- 6 But it is also a question, in this cultural symptomatology, of *political prophecy*: the last plate in *Mnemosyne* displays all of the signs of a long – and recent – history of anti-Semitism, of political propaganda, and of the upheavals that were to be seen in the year 1929, when Hitler's *Mein Kampf* reached record sales in Hamburg and elsewhere in Germany.<sup>9</sup> Here we are, once again – and in spite of the objects, the different styles – in the neighborhood of those *anxious contemporaries* of Warburg who were Benjamin (for his magisterial thesis regarding an 'organization of pessimism' through images themselves<sup>10</sup>), Kurt Tucholsky and John Heartfield (for the striking political montages in their work entitled *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, a *Bilderbuch* published at the very same time as Warburg was creating the last plates of his atlas<sup>11</sup>), and Bertolt Brecht who composed, from the communist point of view, several atlases of images on the tragedies of contemporary history.<sup>12</sup>
- 7 It is no coincidence that Brecht, too, convoked a long cultural duration – from Homer or Aeschylus to Voltaire or Goethe – in order to substantiate a striking formula that was so dear to him: a true *formula of the disaster* according to which war, and the 'dislocation of the world' in general (*die Welt aus den Fugen*: the world out of joint) would constitute, at the root of it, the very 'subject of art' (*das Thema der Kunst*):
- 8 'The dislocation of the world: that is the subject of art. It is impossible to affirm that, without disorder, there would be no art, nor that there could be one: we know of no world that is not disorder. No matter what the universities whisper to us regarding Greek harmony, the world of Aeschylus was full of combat and terror, and so were those of Shakespeare and of Homer, of Dante and of Cervantes, of Voltaire and of Goethe. However pacifistic it was said to be, it speaks of wars, and when art makes peace with the world, it always signed it with a world at war.'<sup>13</sup>
- 9 A world at war? Should we not read the history of art first of all like a history of forms? Warburg's atlas did not neglect this point of view and can even be looked at as a collection of tables for gathering the visual parceling of the world, its infinite variability or formal invention: *Disparates* of circular forms and frontal walls, fluid movements and tabular arrangements, horizontal confrontations and vertical falls ...<sup>14</sup> But Warburg, the founder of an anthropology of images and of an iconology of their 'intervals,' referred any formal singularity to the play – or the conflict – of corporeal, psychic, and cultural movements. Hence the importance of those gestures and of those *Pathosformeln* whose constellations are displayed by the atlas like so many *Caprichos* or 'psychomachias,' those powers of the imagination at the crossroads between madness and reason, *pathos* and *ethos*.<sup>15</sup> This is why the history of images according to Warburg must be thought of as a history of a tragedy that is always brought back between the worst of the *monstra* and the best of the *astra*, suffering and *sophrosynè*, the dislocation of the world and the effort of

reconstruction, of re-montage, to make a 'section in chaos,' that is – to use Warburg's words – a 'thought space' (*Denkraum*).

- 10 There is therefore no form that is not – explicitly or not, secretly or not – an answer to a war, to historical pain and to its lot of *pathos*.<sup>16</sup> The treasury of forms is always, however cruel the conjunction might be, a 'treasury of sufferings' (*Leidschatz*)<sup>17</sup>. Hence the anxious nature, and even the melancholic rooting of the 'nameless science' invented by the great historian of images.<sup>18</sup> Hence, too, the essential affinity that links Warburg's undertaking with that of Benjamin, who did not hesitate to speak of history as the history of the sufferings of the world (*Geschichte als Leidensgeschichte der Welt*)<sup>19</sup>. There would be many more aspects to retrieve in order to establish the scale and the depth of this affinity<sup>20</sup> and to restore Warburg's work, not only in the context of the German 'science of the mind,' but also in this atypical constellation of 'heterodox Jewish thinkers'<sup>21</sup> to which, discretely, he fully belongs.
- 11 In a moving and precise testimony, Klaus Berger described Warburg as a man who, in spite of his proverbial humor and his constant puns, saw everything from the perspective – or on the 'plane of consistency' – of pain: 'He never said: this is right, this is wrong. He said: this is veiled by suffering.'<sup>22</sup> His whole theory of *Pathosformeln* was founded on a thought – either ancient or Nietzschean – about tragedy; his whole theory of memory aimed for a 'psycho-historical' thinking about the conflicts between the *monstra* and the *astra*.<sup>23</sup> In his magnificent funeral eulogy for Aby Warburg given in 1929, Ernst Cassirer perfectly expressed what, in his friend's work, sought to understand *forms* by means of *forces* – 'configuring energies' – which were in turn seen in the eye of their own cyclones, 'in the centre of the storm and of the whirlwind of life itself'; that is, of the *disaster* where time constantly tries to swallow us up:
- 12 'He did not firstly cast his eyes upon works of art, but he felt and saw the great configuring energies behind the works ... Where others had seen determined and delimited forms, self-contained forms, he saw moving forces; he saw what he called the great *Pathosformel* that Antiquity had created and left as a lasting patrimony to humanity ... But this capacity was not only the gift of the researcher, nor that of the artist. He delved here into his own, most deeply felt experience. In himself, he had experienced and learned what he was capable of grasping and interpreting, from the centre of his own being and his own life. "Early on he read the harsh words – he was familiar with suffering, familiar with death." But from the heart of this suffering there came the force and the incomparable particularity of the gaze. Rarely has a researcher more deeply dissolved his deepest suffering into a gaze and thereby liberated it ... Warburg was not a scientist and a researcher in the impassive sense in which he might have contemplated, from on high, the playing out of life, or delighted aesthetically in the mirror of art. He always remained in the centre of the storm and the whirlwind of life itself; he penetrated into its ultimate and deepest tragic problems.'<sup>24</sup>
- 13 In these lines, Cassirer, obviously refers to two crucial episodes – that are inseparable, as we shall see – in the life of Aby Warburg. That suffering or that 'most deeply felt experience' is nothing but Warburg's own madness, that which kept him enclosed, howling and powerless, between the walls of the Kreuzlingen sanatorium. Upon Warburg's leaving the sanatorium, the *Mnemosyne* project figures as a psychical rescue operation and return to the full path of his thought. Cassirer was one of the very few to visit Warburg in his asylum on April 10, 1924. He therefore knew what he was talking

about in his speech in 1929: he knew of the interior conflict, the *visceral war* that the art historian had to lead against his most intimate *monstra*.

- 14 Nor did Cassirer forget the context or the historical heart in which the conflict took place. The fact that Warburg kept himself 'always in the centre of the storm' means also that his *monstra*, however deep, were not simply matters of subjectivity, but in fact matters for historicity and 'culture.' There might not have been a 'visceral war' – psychologically induced – without the world war, the social war, the obsidional war, that sort of *sidereal war* that Warburg, between 1914 and 1918, experienced intensely to the point of madness, from 'the centre of the storm and the whirlwind.' It is no coincidence that right in the midst of the Second World War, in 1942, Cassirer should have ended up devoting himself to a study – almost like a will – to the notion of the 'tragedy of culture': in this text, the evocations of Hegel, of Goethe or of Georg Simmel's classic essay<sup>25</sup> converge naturally in the direction of the anthropology of images and of beliefs so dear to Warburg, and the point of view that could then serve as a reference to any reflection on the tragic fate of culture in the epoch of the dislocation of the world.<sup>26</sup>
- 15 Carl Georg Heise insisted, in his *Persönliche Erinnerungen an Aby Warburg* (Personal Memories of Aby Warburg), on the scholar's 'indescribable suffering,' from 1914, in front of what he called the *Weltkatastrophe*, the 'catastrophe of the world.'<sup>27</sup> The war was literally *suffered* by Aby Warburg – and, in this sense, 'carried' fully on his shoulders as a pagan Atlas or the Hebraic Righteous would do – after several conflicting dimensions whose combined psychic play would end up breaking him, in 1918. The world war appeared, first of all, like a *tragedy for culture*: with it came a reign of pure violence, of excessive radicalized conflict. Nine million dead and 21,000 injured – crippled, disfigured – surrounded, in 1918, the historian of the *Nachleben*. 'Brutalized' societies (according to historian George Mosse's expression), 'simplified' men (according to an expression by Frédéric Rousseau), reason sacrificed to the rationalizations of killing (according to the analyses of Daniel Pick or Alan Kramer): the Great War opened up what Wolfgang Sofsky would call the era of terror of the twentieth century.<sup>28</sup>
- 16 It is likely that Warburg grasped, as he always did in art history, the events of the war themselves from the perspective of a terrifyingly long duration, that of a 'European civil war' – which Enzo Traverso would reconceptualize well beyond the hypotheses of Ernst Nolte<sup>29</sup> – in which the *monstra* would not stop threatening all human life and culture. The fact that the scholar, from the very heart of his delirium, should have sometimes imagined that he was responsible for this war should not be interpreted solely from the angle of his unreason: Warburg, the man of culture, was at the center of a family of bankers who participated directly in the goals of the German economic war, at the same time acting, already, on the global monetary level.<sup>30</sup>
- 17 That is why the First World War, that tragedy for culture, was equally, in Aby Warburg's eyes, a *tragedy in culture*: a tragedy that touched the very heart of what the historian had always attempted to understand to the point of founding the discipline of *Kulturwissenschaft*. We can imagine, for example, the upheaval that Warburg must have felt at the unilateral adoption of the word *Kultur* by German military propaganda which sought to contrast it, from 1914, with the word *Zivilisation* which was intended to mean – against the 'eternal values' of Germanic *Kultur* – the enemy world, the Anglo-French world of technical and economic utilitarianism. We can imagine how a theorist of culture seen as a perpetual *crossing of boundaries* – the spatial and temporal 'migrations' ( *Wanderungen*) that dominate Warburg's analyses – would have observed the aggressive

closing of any boundary, the launching of trench warfare, the immobilization of the *frontlines* that he sometimes recorded with anxiety and feverishness in his notebooks (fig. 4).

- 18 A specific study should be undertaken to put into perspective Warburg's emotional and intellectual response to the events of the Great War – the effect of the disaster on his *pathos* as well as his *logos* – in the context of a 'cultural history' of this period.<sup>31</sup> The 1914–1918 war, as we know, was also a *Kulturkrieg* and a *Bilderkrieg* mobilizing entire civil societies,<sup>32</sup> and first of all the 'cultural elites.' A great number of intellectuals joined the two fronts of the conflict, more often than not with the latest patriotic and nationalist energy, an energy to which even Warburg himself contributed.<sup>33</sup> In the great 'European crisis,' which Pierre Renouvin was one of the first to diagnose,<sup>34</sup> we must mention first of all that 'crisis of the mind' evoked in 1919 by Paul Valéry.<sup>35</sup>
- 19 It is quite probable that Warburg, in such a context, sensed that a new and radical *psychomachia* was breaking out in the Europe of 1914: a conflict, once again – but crueler, more brutal than ever – of the *astra* and the *monstra*; except that, now, the *monstra* had extended their home to the sky itself (aerial combat, gas bombs), not to mention the sky of ideas (nationalism, propaganda). Such is the ineluctable movement of a 'crisis of culture' that the Second World War was to make even more evident in the ruthless analysis that certain Jewish thinkers of the following generation, like Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, Hannah Arendt, or Leo Strauss, were to make.<sup>36</sup> This is how, in the first days of the Great War, the hour struck for the 'last days of reason.'<sup>37</sup>
- 20 The scale of this 'psychomachia' is measured, for example, by the prodigious quantity of publications, testimonies, reflections, and narratives devoted to the war as it was actually happening, to the extent that we speak of *storms of paper* let fly in the cultural space like a linguistic double for the *storms of steel* that raged on the frontlines themselves.<sup>38</sup> Books, newspapers, notices, tracts, posters, letters – but also paintings, medals, postcards, photographs, music, and cinema – reveal an extraordinary activity of representation and of storytelling at that time. The critic Julius Rab, who produced several anthologies during the war, estimated that there were 50,000 'war poems' sent every morning to the German newspapers. Towards the end of the first year of the conflict, some 200 volumes of *Kriegslyrik* had been published in Germany.<sup>39</sup> And that is little when we look at the production of 'war stories' in which the entire spectrum of styles – from factual testimony to the most grandiose lyrical reconstructions, including the novel, of course – was to be found.<sup>40</sup>
- 21 Yet, the intrinsic content of this 'psychomachia' seems to be more difficult to formulate. We can, nevertheless, by following the fundamental idea proposed by Warburg concerning a 'methodological broadening of the boundaries,'<sup>41</sup> consider that a 'parallel war' was happening in Europe regarding the very question of the 'boundaries of thought.' Numerous writers and intellectuals sought to *reclose the boundaries* and to join the fighting in the trenches, the entrenchment of the point of view, the historiographical frontlines: this was a way to carry out a *politics of the enemy* as we see it at work in the stories of Ernst Jünger, for example, when he glorifies the 'immemorial warriors,' justifies the combat as an 'inner experience' and the advent of a 'new world,' and celebrates the 'dark magic' of a creative war of a whole 'deployment of technical energies' that force us into a 'total mobilization' guided by the 'spirit of heroism'<sup>42</sup>... And continuing to affirm – much later – that the 'essential thing is the saving of a particular *nomos*, a mode of being that affirms itself in culture and that we protect in combat.'<sup>43</sup> Jünger would make even more evident



his basic proximity with the ideas of Carl Schmitt on sovereignty and on a 'nomos of the earth' to be defended from any invasion, any contamination, any enemy.<sup>44</sup> In his preface to the first edition of *The Decline of the West*, dated December 1917, Oswald Spengler wished, in a similar vein, that his 'book might not be entirely unworthy of the military sacrifices of Germany.'<sup>45</sup>

- 22 Warburg, as far as I know, never publicly spoke about such position-taking. He attempted, rather, through the publication of a *Rivista illustrata* that saw only two issues, in 1914 and 1915, to extend his hand to his Italian intellectual friends and also the enemies of Germany at war<sup>46</sup>. His suffering in the face of the conflict, however, never went beyond the refusal, the defense of the mutineers or the pacifistic position.<sup>47</sup> But we could find some Warburgian influences in the vehement reflections of someone like Karl Kraus – the anti-Jünger par excellence – on the Great War which was carried on, according to him, with a dangerous mixture of ancient *pathos* and new technologies: 'How do we make war? By directing ancient sentiments with technology.'<sup>48</sup> Against poets who 'comply with war' and accept that it 'reduces death to mere chance,'<sup>49</sup> Kraus even called upon the gods in exile for the states, all taken up with the military-economic strategies, to cease one day killing the world and the world of culture together:
- 23 'What mythological confusion is this? Since when has Mars become the god of commerce and Mercury the god of war? ... I understand sacrificing cotton for one's life. But the other way round? People who adore fetishes will never go so low as to think that the commodity has a soul ... Each state is at war with its own culture. Instead of being at war with its own unculture ... What is undertaken for the profit of the state is often achieved at the cost of the world.'<sup>50</sup>
- 24 From 1909 – long before his well-known position taken in 1930 and 1933 regarding *The Last Days of Mankind* and the rise of Nazism<sup>51</sup> – Kraus had combined the motifs of 'progress' and 'apocalypse.'<sup>52</sup> Against the politics of the enemy carried on by all European nationalisms seeking to 'close the boundaries,' he embodied, among others, the path towards a genuine *cosmopolitics* devoted to 'giving up all rights of customs.' (I am citing here a well-known phrase by Warburg illustrating his methodology of the 'broadening of the boundaries.') Once more, it is Benjamin who offered the most rigorous and abundant formulations regarding this position: at the same time as he publicly defended Karl Kraus, Benjamin showed the fascist component of the writings of Jünger, the 'glorification of war [made as] an unbridled transposition of the theses of art for art's sake.'<sup>53</sup>
- 25 The author of *One-Way Street* did not confuse the scale of the European 'psychomachia' with its real content: in spite, therefore, of the deluge of 'war narratives' published everywhere, he was able to diagnose a real *crisis of the narrative* corresponding at the same time to a *crisis of history* – the dismantled, disassembled world of the Great War – and that of positivist historicity, that epistemic model through which the new times could no longer be understood and deciphered. In 'Experience and Poverty,' Benjamin dared to say – against all patriotism and heroism – that in 1918 'people returned from the front in silence ... not richer but poorer in communicable experience.'<sup>54</sup> In 'The Crisis of The Novel,' he suggested, after the example of Alfred Döblin, that we can see in *documentary montage* an alternative to the dead ends of the traditional narrative, including a war narrative with epic ambitions.<sup>55</sup> In 'The Storyteller' he returned to the crisis of the narrative born of the experience of the Great War, while invoking the manner of immemorial survivals – essentially popular, 'poor' so to speak – in the art of storytelling.<sup>56</sup> This is a way of calling upon Mnemosyne (memory) across the tragedies of culture before



which Clio (history) could only become 'sick' – sick of modern 'barbarities' – according to the grand prosopopoeia written in 1917 by Charles Péguy.<sup>57</sup>

## Warburg Facing the War. Notizkästen 115–118

- 26 The First World War left no one the chance to remain indifferent or unscathed. Everyone in Europe, in one way or another, was *exposed* to this war. No one came back unchanged. Everyone, at one moment or another asked the question of which direction to take – how to maintain a horizon of thought, of project, of desire – in such a situation. When Benjamin insisted on the tragic obstacles opposing the possibility of *experience* by a war that was stamped with the seal of the unthinkable – 'experience fell in value' – it was to invoke immediately the obvious difficulty of the task to 'start from scratch; make a new start; make a little go a long way; begin with a little and build up further,'<sup>58</sup> and of using *memory* so that in the midst of the destruction a *desire* to think might be possible.<sup>59</sup>
- 27 Some people were plunged into the heart of the battles. This was the case for the ethnologist Robert Hertz, student and friend of Marcel Mauss, who died at the front in the Meuse in April 1915, not without having, by means of intervening missives, left enlightened traces of his thinking on the look-out.<sup>60</sup> It was also the case for the two great founders of the Ecole des Annales, Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch. Lucien Febvre fought on the fronts of Ourcq, in Reims and in Douaumont; he was the theoretician and the initiator of a method of combat called 'cross firing'; he never stopped, throughout the war, filling his notebooks, making maps of the frontlines, drawing what he saw around him, collecting photographs<sup>61</sup>. He never really integrated this experience of the war into his ulterior analyses, except perhaps, in half-words – and, by no accident, in 1943 – in his text entitled 'Living through History.'<sup>62</sup>
- 28 Bloch, for his part, elaborated on his experience of the trenches by writing numerous texts, by drawing and by taking photographs which he accumulated throughout the war: plans, lists, stories collected day by day, and portraits of friends, visions of devastated nature, reports of operations, all of this taking shape in one documentation snatched with urgency.<sup>63</sup> From 1914, Bloch fully held his place as historian – that is, as critic of facts and discourses – by publishing a text entitled 'Historical Critique of Testimony,' developed in 1921 by the 'Reflections of a historian on the false news of the war.'<sup>64</sup> It was already a question, in these analyses, of everything that, in parallel, made up the heart of the Warburgian problem: that is, a 'historical psychology' capable of discerning reason (Warburg might have said: the *astra*) of the 'powers of the imagination' (the *monstra*) in times of war, as well as that 'collective memory' of which Bloch spoke, not from Warburg, whose work he undoubtedly did not know, but from his compatriot and friend Maurice Halbwachs.<sup>65</sup> The parallel between the attitudes of Bloch and Warburg to the war has already been well analyzed by Ulrich Raulff.<sup>66</sup> It would be worth continuing this analysis in the future regarding the more fundamental question of the method, for example on the question of cultural comparativism and on the historical content of images in which Bloch shared an interest – without ever, it must be said, systematically developing it – with the school of Warburg.<sup>67</sup>
- 29 The author of *Mnemosyne*, it is true, never directly experienced the din of bombs and the daily horror of the trenches to which so many 'war notebooks' bear witness. But he *exposed* himself, body and soul, to the war: from the beginning of the conflict, he entirely reorganized the workings of his research, of his library, in order to understand the great

‘psychomachia’ of the *monstra* and the *astra* that were at play on a fundamental plane for which only a ‘psycho-history,’ in his eyes, could account. As Reinhart Koselleck has shown, any ‘mutation of experience’ implies a ‘change of method’ in the work of the historian.<sup>68</sup> My own hypothesis, as we have seen, is that this change – with considerable epistemological consequences – was embodied in the *Mnemosyne Atlas* and in the theoretical orientations that its invention brought to light.

- 30 It is as a man of the Enlightenment that Warburg first of all wanted to respond to the irrational fury of the world conflict. While the family bank – installed in the little town of Warburg, then in Hamburg, since the sixteenth century – logically participated in the German war effort, he had to think painfully about the ‘recension of the Jews’ (*Juden-zählung*) ordered in October 1916 by certain officers of the army in order to bring to light the so-called under-representation of Jewish combatants on the front.<sup>69</sup> He thought, however, that the *astra* could fight efficiently with the *monstra* on the very ground of culture and of ideas. This is why he devoted so much energy to founding, with the ethnologist Georg Thilenius and the linguist Giulio Panconcelli-Calzia, a *Rivista illustrata* intended to maintain the European intellectual tissue so as, notably, not to cut off the German intellectuals from their Italian colleagues<sup>70</sup>. We can read in this a short note signed by Wilhelm von Bode – the director of the Berlin museums – on the duty of protecting works of art in enemy territory, or a factual account concerning religious persecutions on the Russian front.<sup>71</sup>
- 31 Faced with a war that he considered, on the anthropological level – and even metaphysical level – an *Urkatastrophe*, an ‘archetypal catastrophe,’ Warburg thus tried to place his work on the level of a *fight with ideas*: a fight *against* certain ideas (those that set man against man, those that seek to close the boundaries, to dig the trenches, to set up the frontlines), or *to help* certain ideas (to open methodologically the boundaries, to recognize the porosity of cultures, to claim the perpetual ‘migration’ of mind). This is what would justify, in particular, his enthusiasm for the idea of a League of Nations and for the efforts toward reconciliation between Germany and France. When, in 1926, Aristide Briand and Adolf Stresemann received the Nobel Prize for Peace in the name of this highly difficult reconciliation, Warburg undertook the publication of a postal stamp – a cross-border image – with a significant title: *Idea vincit*.<sup>72</sup> This formulation at the time of *Mnemosyne* – that is, from 1928–1929 – was also found in the manuscript for the *Grundbegriffe* (Fundamental Ideas): ‘The idea overcomes – everything is possible’ (*Idea vincit – alles ist möglich*).<sup>73</sup>
- 32 But the founder of modern iconology well knew that any cultural ‘psychomachia’ is embodied in images that confront one another (this would be a political way to express the concept that is crucial to Warburg, of ‘polarity’): images that, successively, translate and betray ideas, make them in turn accessible and incomprehensible, simplified or placed in *mises en abîmes*. This is why the ‘fight with ideas’ was not without a *fight with images*: a fight *against* certain images (propaganda, lies, anti-Semitism), or *to help* other images (survivals, comparisons, deconstructions of ideology). This supposed, in the mind of Warburg, the establishment of an extensive documentation on the war, collected in the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek since the start of the hostilities.
- 33 If we keep in mind the private character, or familial character so to speak, of the research institution founded by Warburg, it makes up a considerable documentation. At least 1,500 works about the war were acquired by the library between 1914 and 1918, and innumerable photographs: around 5,000, according to the catalogue, but many of which

are now lost, probably during the transfer of the library to London in 1933. We can consult today some 1,445, distributed in three catalogues. They are press photographs, images bought for use by the German Army, postcards, postal stamps ... Even reduced to a third of its original quantity, and even if Warburg seems to have given up organizing it into an atlas, this iconographic documentation already gives an impression that was soon to be given by the plates of *Mnemosyne*: something like a brilliantly organized disorder, a profusion of images in which extraordinary affinities appear, sending us back to the most fundamental motifs of the Warburgian *Kulturwissenschaft*.

- 34 What do we see in these images? Ancient or religious buildings, monuments of a long cultural duration, collapsed under the bombs; Doric columns speckled with the impact of machine-gun bullets. Many aerial images, signs, par excellence, of modern warfare, most of which have a lunar or antediluvian appearance (like a sign that all destruction leads to an archaeological gaze, *fig. 16*). Terrible visions of the front overrun with barbed wire, the vegetation devastated, everything having the appearance of an exaggeratedly blackened engraving, ghostly landscape in the manner of Hercules Segers or remains of an apocalypse drawn by some expressionist painter. Everywhere, the stigmas of the *Urkatastrophe*, but everywhere, equally, the signs of a technological running of the ravages, like on the documents in which we see how the army demanded that the war be reproducible through photographic or cinematographic images.
- 35 We see also, in this nightmare collection, the meaning of the visual paradoxes so characteristic of the Warburgian gaze. The aerial explosions, the terrifying new technology of this war, disseminate into the sky pretty little white clouds, very similar to those that any art historian is accustomed to seeing in a painting of the Italian Primitive painters. The dirigible – a motif that we will soon find in *Mnemosyne* – hit by a fighter plane has at the same time the implacable appearance of a technological document and the *pathos* of a mythological fall, somewhere between the chariot of Phaeton and the plunging of the damned into Hell. The image of a horse bizarrely suspended above the sea has the involuntary splendor of a shot by Eisenstein. But the sheaves of sugar cane in the artisan's studio simultaneously remind us how war crippled, disfigured, and reduced men to the pain of mutilation, and dissimilarity.
- 36 Elsewhere appear one after another, in an apparent jumble, military parades, the language of gestures of maritime signaling, Saint Sophia at Constantinople occupied by the German army, the beams of the anti-aircraft defense at night, villages in ruins, models designed as stratagems, catalogues for clothes made in paper substitutes, carcasses of tanks, the farewell of women weeping before the departing sailors, church altars covered in military commemorative plaques, ships exploding, the technical equipment of the gun turrets, the funeral of a Jew (killed in combat?), naval shipyards in full activity, bombs left on a beach, houses destroyed from the inside, bridges broken in two, monuments to the dead, army libraries, the meeting of the very latest submarine and of a sailing ship from a previous century, the reprocessing of rubbish, subterranean vehicles, an elephant from the zoo requisitioned for the war effort, wide open coffins, dismantled pylons, the orchestra of the front, field ambulances, a *blokhaus* in the forest, the making of bread in a time of shortage, ration tickets, misery in the streets, a row of flayed cattle in the abattoir, a makeshift military cemetery, soldiers occupying a *shetl* in central Europe, an Easter orthodox procession on the Eastern front ...
- 37 It is clear that in the eyes of Warburg this iconographic cacophony meant as much as the gestural disorder of an attack of hysteria could to the eyes of Sigmund Freud: this visual

kaleidoscope would be, on the whole, no less than a *collection of symptoms*; that is, an immense geology of conflicts working in the open air, crossing over the surfaces and swarming in depths. Consequently, it was necessary to obtain the means – historical, philological, archaeological, philosophical – to interpret the *Urkatastrophe* in the apparent dissemination of its appearances. Hence the establishment, at the heart of the library, of tools for archiving and classing into files the innumerable motifs of this great modern ‘psychomachia.’ Warburg’s *Kriegskartothek* comprised, in 1918, seventy-two boxes holding 90,000 files.<sup>74</sup> What remains today, in the London archive, are three boxes of files (*Notizkästen*) numbered 115, 117, and 118, which bear witness to the intense philological work carried out by Warburg and his collaborators in parallel to his iconographic collection.

- 38 Claudia Wedepohl went through these boxes in 2002. *Kasten 115* is entitled ‘War and culture’ (*Krieg und Kultur*): it makes a list of the objects (medals, postcards, war museums) as well as the theoretical tools necessary for its interpretation (the sociology of Max Weber, for example). *Kasten 117* is devoted more particularly to the ‘superstitions of war’ (*Aberglaube im Krieg*) and gathers all kinds of material, both historical and ethnological, which has already been the object of a conference.<sup>75</sup> *Kasten 118* is entitled ‘War and Art’ (*Krieg und Kunst*) and covers a considerable field from postcards representing Hindenburg – and propaganda images in general – including the futurist manifestos of F.W. Marinetti. A little diary with metallic rings, on 134 pages, completes this apparatus by establishing the basis of an index in which the different writings reveal a collective engagement around Warburg’s project. The entries of this index go from ‘Prehistory’ (*Vorgeschichte*) of the war to the different geographical sectors of its occurrence, unrolling, from ‘Religion’ to ‘Techniques of hygiene’ (*Technik-Hygiene*), from ‘Poetry’ (*Dichtung*) to ‘Ethics’ (*Ethik*), from ‘Arms factories’ (*Münitionsfabriken*) to ‘War Literature’ (*Kriegsliteratur*) and from ‘Celestial Figures’ (*Figurae Coeli*) to ‘Cinema’ (*Kino*).<sup>76</sup>

## Toward a Critical Anthropology of the War

- 39 The undertaking of cultural history and iconology carried out by Warburg on the Great War deserves, of course, to be contextualized. In its own way, it belongs to those ‘paper storms’ which, from 1914, were unleashed around the European intellectual world. It belongs, notably, to the specific German phenomenon – of which we find, in France, only a few examples in that period – of ‘war collections’ (*Kriegssammlungen*) which flourished on a large scale: from the Kaiserliche Universitäts- und Ladesbibliothek of Strasbourg (which was already, for Warburg, at the end of the nineteenth century, a model for his future Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek) to the Royal Library in Berlin, the Deutsche Bücherei of Leipzig or the university library of Jena. Not to mention the extraordinary private collections of Theodor Bergmann in Fürth and of Richard Franck in Berlin and Stuttgart, a veritable institution which employed no less than twenty-four people full time and counted, in 1921, around 45,000 works – plus 2,150 periodic titles.<sup>77</sup> A work by Albert Buddecke on the German *Kriegssammlungen*, which appeared in 1917, already listed 217 collections public and private devoted to the Great War.<sup>78</sup>
- 40 But what radically differentiates the Warburgian project from all these collections, often put on show in public exhibitions for patriotic ends,<sup>79</sup> concerns the *critical content* which guided its principle. The *Kriegssammlungen* targeted the institution of a self-glorifying national memory, while Warburg’s *Kriegssammlungen* opened the way to a genuine

political iconology and, consequently, to all the historical and anthropological analyses that flourish today regarding images produced in the time of the Great War.<sup>80</sup> The 'war collection' gathered by Warburg was guided, indeed, by an anthropological concern – characteristic of his *Kulturwissenschaft* in general – and this explains his extremely broad approach, beyond any hierarchy of aesthetic values between 'works of art' and 'imageries,' of the considerable *visual field* put into play during the Great War. The works on 'war art,' acquired by the library in Hamburg from 1914 to 1918, are striking to our contemporary gaze in the general mediocrity of paintings reproduced.<sup>81</sup>

- 41 Any 'psychomachia' engages, well beyond a history of art with limited boundaries, the launching of a vast *anthropology of images* and of the beliefs that these images reconfigure and ceaselessly retransform. If *Kasten 117* was the object of specific attention on the part of specialists, it is first of all because its subject, the 'superstitions of war' (*Aberglaube im Krieg*), entered directly into such an anthropological design. It is clear, for example, that certain fundamental motifs in the *Mnemosyne* project – like the 'unsettling duality' (*die unheimliche Doppelheit*) of triumph and of martyrdom, or the crucial notion of 'demonization' (*Dämonisierung*)<sup>82</sup> – are at work, already, in Warburg's work on the Great War.<sup>83</sup> I believe it is not by chance that the collection of *disasters in anthropomorphism* composed by Georges Bataille and his friends from *Documents* between 1929 and 1930 should have ended up – under the influence of the work of Marcel Mauss – in a 'Collège de sociologie' in whose discussion, from 1937 to 1939, was sketched an anthropology of war<sup>84</sup> that Ernst H. Kantorowicz, Georges Dumézil or Franco Cardini would later found historically.<sup>85</sup>
- 42 Recent historiography of the Great War has ended up adopting this point of view of cultural anthropology.<sup>86</sup> People even spoke of the war from the perspective of myth.<sup>87</sup> Above all, they took account of the intrinsic difficulties in any legibility of experience, which amounted to asking the question of *beliefs* in the face of facts and of *rumors* in the face of testimonies, notably on the highly debated question of 'German atrocities.'<sup>88</sup> But, where the historian can try, legitimately, to discern the 'true' from the 'false' in this generalized 'system of uncertainty' which constantly weaves competing discourses,<sup>89</sup> the anthropologist – or the archaeologist of discourses, in the manner of Michel Foucault – will adopt a more transversal gaze and will situate his *critique of language*, or of images, on another level. This was the level that Warburg characterized with the term *Kulturwissenschaft*.
- 43 Just as one must not confuse the *Kriegskartothek* of Warburg with the patriotic *Kriegssammlungen* who were his contemporaries, one must no doubt dissociate the problem of *Kasten 117* from the numerous positivist works that were published from 1914 and which simplified things by accusing the obstinate 'superstitions of war' of being pure and simple 'errors.' Some examples: In 1916, an article was written by Waldemar Deonna on the 'Increase of Superstitions in Times of War,' while a critique was made by Yves de la Brière, of prophetic oracles that proliferated from the beginning of the conflict.<sup>90</sup> In 1917, Lucien Roure created in his turn his own catalogue of 'superstitions of war' – but so did Guillaume Apollinaire, with a more cheerful tone indeed, and much less accusatory.<sup>91</sup> In 1918, Albert Dauzat would devote a whole work to the 'legends and superstitions of war,' in which the positivist viewpoint dominates once again, coming directly from Auguste Comte (the 'fictional' state of fetishism) or Gustave Le Bon:
- 44 'All troubled periods, and in particular in war, by increasing general nervousness and credulousness, give birth to a great number of false rumors that, once they correspond to

the general state of mind, were quick to be substantiated in the simplistic souls of the masses. Acting on weak and emotive brains, they provoke hallucinations, even prophetic images. Finally, multiplying the occasions for dangers, they are favorable to waking and to development of ancestral superstitions. Despite the advanced state of our civilization, the global conflict could not escape this law. To the curious observer it has offered an abundant and picturesque pick of the most varied facts, of which we would not have suspected, five years ago, the possible – and fast as well as multiple – appearance around us.<sup>92</sup>

- 45 Against this simplistic point of view – or ‘evolutionist,’ in the trivial sense of the term, where reason gets off very lightly – the Warburgian analysis of ‘survivals’ made it possible to understand, on a much more fundamental level, the *anachronistic* coexistence of a *modern* war marked by terrible technological ‘novelties’ such as aerial bombardments or chemical weapons,<sup>93</sup> and yet crossed by so many *archaisms* of social behavior. The ‘psycho-historical’ point of view of the *Nachleben* made it possible, indeed, not to dissociate these paradoxes of temporality, with Warburg showing himself, once again, to be very close to Freud’s analyses redefining – precisely in the years 1916 and 1917 – the indissociable relations between psychical ‘evolution’ and ‘regression.’<sup>94</sup> Walter Benjamin was, in 1925, to think again about the ethical and political consequences of such an anachronism, when the war, so technologically *new* that ‘the human imagination [refused] to follow it,’ created a state of *psychosis* where the chemical weapon – the clouds of gas – became like a ‘ghost’ that is as unfathomable as it is ruthless.<sup>95</sup>
- 46 Warburg – who, let us remember, defined the history of images as a ‘history of ghosts for big people’ (*Gespensstergeschichte f[ür] ganz Erwachsene*)<sup>96</sup> – therefore approached the Great War as a fight against ideas, a fight with ideas, but also a *fight against ghosts*; a fight in which the whole of European civilization was engaged no matter what. His analysis of the ‘superstitions of war’ must, no doubt, have led to a revision of the *survivals* at work in the great ‘psychomachia’ of the time.<sup>97</sup> We will not be surprised to find that the files in *Kasten 117* consign certain spiritualist phenomena (apparitions of the dead) or mystical phenomena (the symmetrical cases of Barbara Weigand in Germany and of Claire Ferchaud in France) of the Great War that have since been studied carefully by historians.<sup>98</sup> But it has to do, in the Warburgian view, with situating all these phenomena in an anthropology or a ‘psycho-history’ that could verify the *politics of survival* at work in each cultural symptom added to the collection of *Kasten 117*. This is why it is essential to recall the coexistence of this *Kriegskartothek* with the research by Warburg in the same years on the religious and political imagery of the Reformation – another period of schism and cultural crisis – haunted by chimerical beings, pope-donkeys, monk-calves and other monstrous sows of Lutheran propaganda.<sup>99</sup>
- 47 But Warburg, as Nietzsche had done in his own time and as Georges Bataille would soon do, played dangerously with the fire of this ‘psychomachia.’ Arranging and rearranging on his work table the images of his *Kriegskartothek*, was he not making himself the soothsayer or the haruspex of the great psychical conflicts that surrounded him and went through him? Like the first plate of *Mnemosyne* on divination, the last devoted to contemporary history appears like an exercise in political divination – or, at least, anxiety, or presentiment. We could say, then, that Warburg conceived his atlas (or his own existence as a modern Atlas) only to join dangerously all the meanings of the Latin word that he understood well, the word *superstes*. It is a word for survivor, for testimony, but also, for superstition.



- 48 Emile Benveniste showed that *superstes* signifies, first of all, the one who remains, not so much above but rather *beyond* or *over* something. It refers to the act of ‘surviving,’ of ‘getting over,’ as we say of someone who ‘survived an ordeal, death’; it refers, more generally to the act of ‘having crossed some event, of getting over that event’ ... and, thus, ‘of having been a witness to it.’<sup>100</sup> The *superstes*, consequently, is the one who assumes the *suprestitio* as ‘the property of being present’ as a witness to an event from which he is far away in space and time: in sum, the *soothsayer of a history* that is past, present, or future, in which he did not physically participate. This ‘capacity for presence’ fascinates and worries at the same time. Does it not characterize all the poetics of the great historians? Whatever the case, we know that it is the ‘capacity for presence’ itself that brought the Romans – for whom divination, as we have seen, was an exogenous, foreign, cross-boundary practice, a ‘Babylonian’ or ‘Etruscan’ practice – to distinguish the dangerous *supertitio* from their own official *religio*.<sup>101</sup> By approaching the extreme of the cultural phenomena of the Great War, Warburg kept to some extent over and above the ‘true’ and the ‘false,’ in an area of thought far away from any religion – for example, the patriotic or bellicose religion of the German *Kriegssammlungen* or the epic narratives in the style of Jünger – yet, it must be said, dangerously close to his objects of study: the images considered to be like so many busy ghosts.
- 49 “*Sampling Chaos: Aby Warburg and the Photographic Atlas of the Great War*” is part of the essay “*Atlas or the Anxious Gay Science*,” first published in the exhibition catalogue *Atlas. How to Carry the World on One’s Back? This exhibition was organized by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (November 26, 2010–March 28, 2011) in collaboration with Sammlung Falckenberg of Hamburg and ZKM/Museum für Neue Kunst from Karlsruhe*.

---

## NOTES

1. Gilles DELEUZE and Félix GUATTARI, *What is Philosophy?* trans. H. Tomlinson and G. Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 203.
2. Charles BAUDELAIRE, *Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, trans. P.E. Charvet (London: Penguin, 2006), 237.
3. August SANDER, *Face of Our Time* (Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 2008).
4. Aby WARBURG, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne. Gesammelte Schriften, II-1*, ed. M. Warnke and C. Brink (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000 [2nd ed. revised 2003]), 21 (pl. 4), 25 (pl. 6), 27 (pl. 7), 29 (pl. 8), 125 (pl. 75), 129 (pl. 77).
5. See Georges DIDI-HUBERMAN, *La Ressemblance informe, ou le gai savoir visuel selon Georges Bataille* (Paris: Macula, 1995), 333–83.
6. A. WARBURG, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* (note 4), 15 (pl. 1), 19 (pl. 3), 25 (pl. 6), 35 (pl. 22), 55 (pl. 32), 69 (pl. 39), 87 (pl. 47), 103 (pl. 56), 105 (pl. 57).
7. See Walter BENJAMIN, ‘Le surréalisme. Le dernier instantané de l’intelligentsia européenne,’ trans. M. de Gandillac, rev. P. Rusch, *Œuvres, II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 113–34.
8. A. WARBURG, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* (note 4), 131–33.
9. See Charlotte SCHOELL-GLASS, *Aby Warburg und der Antisemitismus. Kulturwissenschaft als Geistespolitik* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1998), 233–46 and by the same author, ‘Aby Warburg Late



Comments on Symbol and Ritual,' *Science in Context* 12, no. 4 (1999): 621–42; “‘Serious Issues’: The Last Plates of Warburg’s Picture Atlas *Mnemosyne*’ in *Art History as Cultural History. Warburg’s Projects*, ed. Richard WOODFIELD, 183–208 (Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 2001). Wolfram PICHLER and Gudrum SWABODA, ‘Gli spazi di Warburg. Topografie storico-culturali, autobiografiche e mediali nell’atlante *Mnemosyne*’ in *Quaderni Warburg Italia* 1, 2003: 99–105 and 114–21; G. DIDI-HUBERMAN, ‘L’image brûle,’ in *Penser par les images. Autour des travaux de Georges Didi-Huberman*, ed. Laurent ZIMMERMANN, 24–38 (Nantes: Éditions Cécile Defaut, 2006).

10. W. BENJAMIN, ‘Paralipomènes et variantes des “thèses sur le concept d’histoire”,’ in *Écrits français* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 350.

11. Kurt TUCHOLSKY and John HEARTFIELD, *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles. Ein Bilderbuch* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1929 [Hambourg: Rowohlt, 1973]).

12. See G. DIDI-HUBERMAN, *Quand les images prennent position. L’œil de l’histoire, 1* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2009).

13. Bertold BRECHT, ‘Exercices pour comédiens,’ trans. J.-M. Valentin, *L’Art du comédien. Écrits sur le théâtre* (Paris: L’Arche, 1999), 121 (translation modified).

14. A. WARBURG, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* (note 4), 11 (pl. B), 17–23 (pl. 2–6), 37–45 (pl. 23–26), 49–51 (pl. 28–30), 77 (pl. 42), 103 (pl. 56).

15. See Salvatore SETTIS, ‘Pathos und Ethos, Morphologie und Funktion,’ *Vorträge aus dem Warburg-Haus*, I, 1997, p. 31–73.

16. A. WARBURG, *Mnemosyne. Grundbegriffe II*, (London: Warburg Institute Archive, III.102.3 and III.102.4), p. 25, 80, etc.

17. See Martin WARNEKE, “‘Der Leidschatz der Menschheit wird humaner Besitz”,’ *Der Menschenrechte des Auges. Über Aby Warburg* (Francfort-sur-le-Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1980), 113–86.

18. See Konrad HOFFMANN, ‘Angst und Methode nach Warburg: Erinnerung als Veränderung,’ in *Aby Warburg. Akten des internationalen Symposions Hamburg 1990*, ed. Horst BREDEKAMP, Michael DIERS, and C. SCHOELL-GLASS, 261–67 (Weinheim: VCH-Acta Humaniora, 1991); Bernd VILLHAUER, *Aby Warburgs Theorie der Kultur. Detail und Sinnhorizont*, 112–14 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002); Marco BERTOZZI, *Il detective melanconico e altri saggi filosofici* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2008), 95–137.

19. W. BENJAMIN, *Origine du drame baroque allemand*, trans. S. Muller with A. Hirt (Paris: Flammarion, 1985), 179.

20. See Roland KANY, *Mnemosyne als Programme. Geschichte, Erinnerung und die Andacht zum Unbedeutenden im Werk von Usener, Warburg und Benjamin* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1987), 179–85; Jochen BECKER, ‘Ursprung so wie Zerstörung: Sinnbild und Sinngebung bei Warburg und Benjamin,’ in *Allegorie und Melancholie*, ed. Willem van REIJEN, 64–89 (Francfort-sur-le-Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1992); Marianne SCHULLER, ‘Bilder – Schriften zum Gedächtnis. Freud, Warburg, Benjamin: Eine Konstellation,’ *Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 2, no. 1 (1993): 73–95; Matthew RAMPLEY, ‘From Symbol to Allegory: Aby Warburg’s Theory of Art,’ *Art Bulletin* 79, no 1 (1997): 41–55; M. RAMPLEY, ‘Archives of Memory: Walter Benjamin’s *Arcades Project* and Aby Warburg’s *Mnemosyne Atlas*,’ in *The Optic of Walter Benjamin, De-, dis-, ex-*, vol. 3, ed. Alex COLES, 94–117 (London: Black Dog, 1999); M. RAMPLEY, *The Remembrance of Things Past. On Aby M. Warburg and Walter Benjamin* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000) 73–100; Adi EFAL, ‘Warburg’s “Pathos Formula” in Psychoanalytic and Benjaminian Contexts,’ *Assaph*, no. 5, 2000: 221–38; B. VILLHAUER, *Aby Warburgs Theorie der Kultur* (note 18), 87–103; Cornelia ZUMBUSCH, *Wissenschaft in Bildern. Symbol und dialektisches Bild in Aby Warburgs Mnemosyne-Atlas und Walter Benjamins Passagen-Werk* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004), 31–127 and 246–281.

21. See Michael LÖWY, *Juifs hétérodoxes. Messianisme, romantisme, utopie* (Paris: Éditions de l’Éclat, 2010).

22. Klaus BERGER, 'Souvenirs sur Aby Warburg,' *Trafic*, no. 45, 2003: p. 100.
23. See Kurt FORSTER, 'Aby Warburg's History of Art: Collective Memory and the Social Mediation of Images,' *Daedalus* 105, no. 1 (1976): 169–76; M. SCHULLER, 'Unterwegs. Zum Gedächtnis. Nach Aby Warburg,' in *Denkräume. Zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft*, ed. Silvia BAUMGART et al., 149–60 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1993); Ulrich PORT, "'Katharsis des Leidens." Aby Warburgs "Pathosformeln" und ihre konzeptionellen Hintergründe in Rhetorik, Poetik und Tragödien-theorie,' *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, no. 73, 1999 (Sonderheft): 5–42.
24. Ernst CASSIRER, 'Éloge funèbre du professeur Aby M. Warburg,' *Œuvres*, XII. *Écrits sur l'art* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1995), 55–56.
25. See Georg SIMMEL, 'Le concept et la tragédie de la culture,' *La Tragédie de la culture et autres essais* (Paris: Éditions Rivages, 1988), 177–215.
26. E. CASSIRER, *Logique des sciences de la culture* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1991), 211–12.
27. Carl Georg HEISE, *Persönliche Erinnerungen an Aby Warburg* (New York: Eric M. Warburg, 1947), 42–44.
28. See John U. NEF, *La Route de la Guerre totale. Essai sur les relations entre la guerre et le progrès humain* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), 93–116; George L. MOSSE, *De la Grande Guerre au totalitarisme. La brutalisation des sociétés européennes* (Paris: Hachette Littératures, 1999); Daniel PICK, *War Machine. The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1993), 165–88; Frédéric ROUSSEAU, *La Guerre censurée. Une histoire des combattants européens de 14-18* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1999 [2003]), 31–174; Wolfgang SOFSKY, *L'Ère de l'épouvante. Folie meurtrière, terreur, guerre* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), 127 and 143–49; Michel GOYA, *La Chair et l'acier. L'armée française et l'invention de la guerre moderne (1914-1918)* (Paris: Tallandier, 2004); Alan KRAMER, *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 31–68.
29. ENZO TRAVERSO, *À feu et à sang. De la guerre civile européenne, 1914-1945* (Paris: Stock, 2007), 9–21 and 35–127.
30. See Georges-Henri SOUTOU, *L'Or et le sang. Les buts de guerre économiques de la Première Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 33, 104, 120–27, 373–76, 743–44; Ron CHERNOW, *The Warburgs. The Twentieth-Century Odyssey of a Remarkable Jewish Family* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 141–90; Niall FERGUSON, 'Max Warburg and German Politics: The Limits of Financial Power in Wilhelmine Germany,' in *Wilhelminism and Its Legacy: German Modernities, Imperialism, and the Meaning of Reform, 1890-1930*, ed. Geoff ELEY and James RETALLACK, 185–201 (Oxford-New York: Bergham Books, 2003).
31. See Antoine PROST and Jay WINTER, *Penser la Grande Guerre. Un essai d'historiographie* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2004), 42–50; Jean-Jacques BECKER, ed., *Histoire culturelle de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2005).
32. See Jurgen KOCKA, *Facing Total War: German Society, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1984); Christophe PROCHASSON, 'La guerre en ses cultures,' in *Histoire culturelle de la Grande Guerre*, ed. J.-J. BECKER (note 31); and by the same author, *1914-1918. Retours d'expériences* (Paris: Tallandier, 2008), 51–67.
33. General works: Roland N. STROMBERG, *Redemption by War. The Intellectuals and 1914*, (Lawrence, KS: Regents Press of Kansas, 1982); Aviel ROSHWALD and Richard STITES, eds., *European Culture in the Great War. The Arts, Entertainment, and Propaganda, 1914-1918* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Vincenzo CALI, Gustavo CORNI, and Giuseppe FERRANDI, eds., *Gli intellettuali e la Grande guerra* (Bologne: Società Editrice Il Mulino, 2000). On the French side: Philippe SOULEZ, ed., *Les Philosophes et la guerre de 14* (Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1988); Martha HANNA, *The Mobilization of Intellect: French Scholars and Writers during the Great War* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1996), 78–105; Christophe PROCHASSON and Anne RASMUSSEN, *Au nom de la Patrie. Les intellectuels et la Première Guerre mondiale, 1910-1919*

(Paris: La Découverte, 1996); C. PROCHASSON, 1914-1918. *Retours d'expériences* (Paris: Tallandier, 2008), 273-361. On the German side: John A. MOSES, 'Pan-Germanism and the German Professors, 1914-1918,' *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 15, no. 3 (1969): 45-60; Wolfgang J. MOMMSEN, ed., *Kultur und Krieg: Die Rolle der Intellektuellen, Künstler und Schriftsteller im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996); Peter JELAVICH, 'German Culture in the Great War,' in *European Culture in the Great War*, ed. A. ROSHWALD and R. STITES (note 33), 32-57; Bernhard VOM BROCKE 'La guerra degli intellettuali tedeschi,' in *Gli intellettuali e la Grande guerra*, ed. V. CALI et al. (note 33), 373-409.

34. Pierre RENOUVIN, *La Crise européenne et la Première Guerre mondiale (1904-1918)* (Paris: PUF, 1969), 5-130.

35. Paul VALÉRY, 'La crise de l'esprit,' *Œuvres, I*, ed. J. Hytier (Paris: Gallimard, 1957), 988-1000.

36. See W. BENJAMIN, 'Critique de la violence,' *Œuvres, I* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 210-43; Theodor W. ADORNO and Max HORKHEIMER, *Dialectique de la raison. Fragments philosophiques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 13-20; Hannah ARENDT, 'La crise de la culture. Sa portée sociale et politique,' in *La Crise de la culture. Huit exercices de pensée politique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972 [1989]), 253-88; Léo STRAUSS, 'La crise de notre temps,' in *Nihilisme et politique* (Paris: Payot & Rivages, 2001 [2004]), 81-117; Corinne PELLUCHON, *Leo Strauss: Une autre raison, d'autres Lumières. Essai sur la crise de la rationalité contemporaine* (Paris: Vrin, 2005), 7-39.

37. See Jens Malte FISCHER, 'Die letzten Tage der Vernunft. Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Intellektuellen,' in *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit. Bilder des Ersten Weltkrieges*, ed. Rainer ROTHER (Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum-Ars Nicolai, 1994), 49-55.

38. See Christophe DIDIER, ed., 1914-1918: *Orages de papier. Les collections de guerre des bibliothèques* (Strasbourg/Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire de Strasbourg/Somogy, 2008).

39. *Ibid.*, 18.

40. General works: Léon RIEGEL, *Guerre et littérature. Le bouleversement des consciences dans la littérature romanesque inspirée par la Grande Guerre (littératures française, anglo-saxonne et allemande), 1910-1930* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1978); Jean KAEMPFER, *Poétique du récit de guerre* (Paris: José Corti, 1998), 211-73; Nicolas BEAUPRÉ, *Écrire en guerre, écrire la guerre: France, Allemagne, 1914-1920* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2006). On the French side: Jean VIC, *La Littérature de guerre. Manuel méthodique et critique des publications de langue française (août 1914-août 1916)* (Paris: Payot, 1918); André DUCASSE, *La Guerre racontée par les combattants. Anthologie des écrivains du front (1914-1918)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1932); Maurice RIEUNEAU, *Guerre et révolution dans le roman français de 1919 à 1939* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 2000), 11-215; Leonard V. SMITH, 'Le corps et la survie d'une identité dans les écrits de guerre français,' *Annales. Histoire, sciences sociales* 55, no. 1 (2000): 111-133; Bernard GIOVANANGELI, ed., *Écrivains combattants de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Bernard Giovanangeli-Ministère de la Défense, 2004); C. PROCHASSON, 1914-1918. *Retours d'expériences* (note 33), 161-272. On the German side: Maurice BOUCHER, *Le Roman allemand (1914-1933) et la crise de l'esprit. Mythologie des inquiétudes* (Paris: PUF, 1961); Klaus VONDONG, ed., *Kriegserlebnis. Der Erste Weltkrieg in der literarischen Gestaltung und symbolischen Deutung der Nationen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1980); Hermann KORTE, *Der Krieg in der Lyrik des Expressionismus. Studien zur Evolution eines literarischen Themas* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1981); Hans-Harald MÜLLER, *Der Krieg und die Schriftsteller. Der Kriegeroman der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986).

41. A. WARBURG, 'Art italien et astrologie internationale au Palazzo Schifanoia à Ferrare,' *Essais florentins* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1990), 215. See G. DIDI-HUBERMAN, *L'Image survivante. Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2002), 35-50.

42. Ernst JÜNGER, *Orages d'acier. Journal de guerre* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1970), 5 and 31; and by the same author, *La Guerre comme expérience intérieure* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1997 [2008]); *Le Boqueteau* 125 (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 2000 [2008]), 8-9; 'Feu et mouvement' [original title:

- 'Mathématique guerrière'], in *Le Boqueteau 125* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 2000 [2008]), 195–208; 'La mobilisation totale,' in *L'État universel, suivi de La Mobilisation totale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 17; *Das Antlitz des Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Neufeld & Henius Verlag, 1930); and E. JÜNGER and Edmund SCHULTZ, *Die veränderte Welt. Eine Bilderfibel unserer Zeit* (Breslau: Wilhelm G. Korn Verlag, 1933).
43. E. JÜNGER, *Le Mur du temps* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963 [1994]), 98.
44. Carl SCHMITT, 'Théologie politique. Quatre chapitres sur la théorie de la souveraineté,' *Théologie politique 1922, 1969* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 1–75; by the same author, *Le Nomos de la Terre dans le droit des gens du Jus Publicum Europaeum* (Paris: PUF, 2001 [2008]), 70–86 (on the *nomos*) and 256–78 (on the Great War).
45. Oswald SPENGLER, *Le Déclin de l'Occident. Esquisse d'une morphologie de l'histoire universelle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948 [corrected edition 1976]), 11.
46. A. WARBURG, Georg THILENIUS, and Giulio PANCONCELLI-CALZIA, eds., *La Guerra del 1914-15. Rivista illustrata dei mesi Novembre Dicembre Gennaio Febbraio* (Hambourg: Broschek & Co., 1915). See Anne SPAGNOLO-STIFF, 'L'appello di Aby Warburg a un'intesa italo-tedesca: La guerra del 1914-1915. Rivista illustrata,' in *Storia dell'arte e politica culturale intorno al 1900. La fondazione dell'Istituto Germanico di Storia dell'Arte di Firenze*, ed. Max SEIDEL, 249–69 (Venise: Marsilio, 1999); Dorothea MCEWAN, 'Ein Kampf gegen Windmühlen. Warburgs pro-italienische publizistische Initiative,' in *Kasten 117. Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Gottfried KORFF, 135–63, (Tübingen: Tübinger Vereinigung für Volkskunde, 2007).
47. See Luc RASSON, *Écrire contre la guerre: littérature et pacifismes, 1916-1938* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997); André LOEZ, 14–18. *Les refus de la guerre. Une histoire des mutins* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010).
48. Karl KRAUS, *La Nuit venue* (Paris: Éditions Gérard Lebovici, 1986), 168.
49. Ibid., 108 and 115.
50. Ibid., 105, 109, and 123.
51. K. KRAUS, *The Last Days of Mankind* (Ungar: Pub, 2000). See Jacques BOUVERESSE and Gerald STIEG, eds., *Les Guerres de Karl Kraus*, special issue of *Agone. Histoire, politique et sociologie*, no. 35–36, 2006; J. BOUVERESSE, *Satire et prophétie: Les voix de Karl Kraus* (Marseille: Agone, 2007), 39–120.
52. J. BOUVERESSE, 'Le progrès,' and 'Apocalypse,' *La Littérature démolie* (Paris: Payot & Rivages, 1990 [1993]), 137–46 and 147–64.
53. W. BENJAMIN, 'Théories du fascisme allemand. À propos de l'ouvrage collectif *Guerre et guerriers* publié sous la direction d'Ernst Jünger,' *Œuvres, II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 198–215; and by the same author 'Karl Kraus,' *Œuvres, II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 228–73. See Michel VANOOSTHUYSE, *Fascisme et littérature pure. La fabrique d'Ernst Jünger* (Marseille: Agone, 2005).
54. W. BENJAMIN, 'Experience and Poverty' (1933) in *Selected Writings* vol. 2 (Belknap: Harvard University Press, 1999), 731.
55. W. BENJAMIN, 'La crise du roman. À propos de *Berlin Alexanderplatz* de Döblin,' *Œuvres, II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 189–197, quote from 192.
56. W. BENJAMIN, 'Le conteur. Réflexions sur l'œuvre de Nicolas Leskov,' *Œuvres, III* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 114–151.
57. Charles PÉGUY, *Clio* (Paris: Gallimard, 1932 [2002]), 17.
58. W. BENJAMIN, 'Experience and Poverty' in *Selected Writings*, vol 2 1927-1934, trans. R. Livingstone (Belknap: Harvard Press 1999), 732.
59. See Nicolas PETHES, *Mnemographie. Poetik der Erinnerung und Destruktion nach Walter Benjamin* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1999).
60. Robert HERTZ, *Un ethnologue dans les tranchées, août 1914-avril 1915. Lettres à sa femme Alice*, ed. Alexander RILEY and Philippe BESNARD (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2002).
61. See Henri FEBVRE, 'Lucien Febvre, mon père,' postface to Lucien FEBVRE, *Vivre l'histoire*, ed. Brigitte MAZON (Paris: Robert Laffont-Armand Colin, 2009), 993. I wish to thank Henri Febvre and Brigitte Mazon for giving me access to these documents.

62. L. FEBVRE, 'Vivre l'histoire,' *Vivre l'histoire*, ed. B. MAZON (Paris: Robert Laffont-Armand Colin, 2009), 21–35.
63. Marc BLOCH, 'Écrits et photographies de guerre,' *L'Histoire, la Guerre, la Résistance*, ed. Annette BECKER and Étienne BLOCH (Paris: Gallimard, 2006), 111–292. I wish to thank Yves Bloch for giving me access to his notebooks.
64. M. BLOCH, 'Critique historique et critique du témoignage' and 'Réflexions d'un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre,' in *L'Histoire, la Guerre, la Résistance* (note 63), 97–107 and 293–316.
65. M. BLOCH, 'Mémoire collective, tradition et coutume. À propos d'un livre récent,' in *L'Histoire, la Guerre, la Résistance* (note 63), 335–46.
66. Ulrich RAULFF, 'Parallel gelesen: Die Schriften von Aby Warburg und Marc Bloch zwischen 1914 und 1924,' in *Aby Warburg*, ed. H. BREDEKAMP et al. (note 18), 167–78.
67. See M. BLOCH, 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes' and 'Photographies aériennes, musées, arts populaires' and 'Projet d'un enseignement d'histoire comparée des sociétés européennes. Candidature au Collège de France,' in *L'Histoire, la Guerre, la Résistance* (note 63), 347–80, 393–406, and 443–50.
68. Reinhart KOSELLECK, 'Mutation de l'expérience et changement de méthode. Esquisse historico-anthropologique,' *L'Expérience de l'histoire* (Paris: Gallimard-Le Seuil, 1997), 201–47.
69. See R. CHERNOW, *The Warburgs* (note 30), 141–90; C. SCHOELL-GLASS, *Aby Warburg und der Antisemitismus* (note 9), 119–153; Marc A. RUSSELL, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Aby Warburg and the Public Purposes of Art in Hamburg, 1896–1918* (New York-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007), 180–219.
70. A. WARBURG, G. THILENIUS, and G. PANCONCELLI-CALZIA, *La Guerra del 1914. Rivista illustrata dei primi tre mesi, Agosto Settembre Ottobre* (Hambourg: Broschek & Co., 1914) and *La Guerra del 1914–15* (note 46). See A. SPAGNOLO-STIFF, 'L'appello di Aby Warburg a un'intesa italo-tedesca' (note 46); D. MCEWAN, 'Idea Vincit. La volante e vittoriosa idea. Una commissione artistica di Aby Warburg,' in *Lo sguardo di Giano. Aby Warburg fra tempo e memoria*, ed. Claudia CIERI VIA and Pietro MONTANI (Turin-Racconigi: Nino Aragno Editore, 2004), 345–76; Paolo SANVITO, 'Warburg, l'antagonismo Italia-Germania e la Guerra. Analisi di un cortocircuito politico e interiore,' in *Aby Warburg e la cultura italiana. Fra sopravvivenze e prospettive di ricerca*, ed. C. CIERI VIA and Micol FORTI, 51–62 (Rome-Milan: Sapienza Università di Roma-Mondadori Università, 2009).
71. A. WARBURG, G. THILENIUS, and G. PANCONCELLI-CALZIA, 'La Guerra del 1914 ...' (note 70), 16 and 'La Guerra del 1914–15 ...' (note 46), 22–23.
72. See U. RAULFF, 'Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg einer Idee "Idea Vincit": Warburg, Stresemann und die Briefmarke,' *Vorträge aus dem Warburg-Haus*, 6, 2002: 125–62; D. MCEWAN, 'Idea Vincit' (note 70), 345–76.
73. A. WARBURG, *Mnemosyne. Grundbegriffe II* (note 16), 1 (dated July 6, 1929).
74. See G. KORFF, 'Einleitung' and Peter J. SCHWARTZ, 'Aby Warburgs Kriegskartothek. Vorbericht einer Rekonstruktion,' in *Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. Korff (note 46), 11 and 39–69.
75. Ibid.
76. London, Warburg Institute Archive, IV.64.1.
77. See C. DIDIER, ed., *1914–1918: Orages de papier* (note 38), 16–27.
78. Albert BUDDECKE, *Die Kriegssammlungen. Ein Nachweis ihrer Einrichtung und ihres Bestandes* (Oldenbourg: Gerhard Stalling, 1917). See Anke TE HEESSEN, 'Schnitt 1915. Zeitungsausschnittsammlungen im Ersten Weltkrieg' and Alexandra KAISER, '“...das Material zu sammeln, das dieser Krieg in solcher Fülle schuf wie keiner vorher.” Kriegssammlungen und Kriegssammler im Ersten Weltkrieg,' in *Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. KORFF (note 46), 71–85 and 87–115.

79. See Susan BRANDT, *Vom Kriegsschauplatz zum Gedächtnisraum: Die Westfront 1914-1949* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000) and 'Exposer la Grande Guerre: La Première Guerre mondiale représentée dans les expositions en Allemagne de 1914 à nos jours,' in *Histoire culturelle de la Grande Guerre*, ed. J.-J. BECKER (note 31), 139-55; Christine BEIL, *Der aufgestellte Krieg. Präsentationen des Ersten Weltkrieges 1914-1939* (Tübingen: Tübinger Vereinigung für Volkskunde, 2005).
80. See Bodo VON DEWITZ, 'Zur Geschichte der Kriegsphotographie des Ersten Weltkrieges,' and Thomas NOLL, 'Sinnbild und Erzählung. Zur Ikonographie des Krieges in den Zeitschriftenillustrationen 1914 bis 1918,' and Alain SAYAG, "'Wir sagten Adieu einer ganzen Epoche'" (Apollinaire). Französische Kriegsphotographie,' and Dieter VORSTEHEN, 'Bilder für den Sieg. Das Plakat im Ersten Weltkrieg,' in *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit. Bilder des Ersten Weltkrieges*, ed. R. ROTHER, 163-76, 259-72, 187-96, and 149-62 (Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum-Ars Nicolai, 1994); Marie-Monique HUSS, *Histoires de famille: Cartes postales et culture de guerre* (Paris: Éditions Noësis, 2000); Jean-Marie LINSOLAS, 'La photographie et la guerre: Un miroir du vrai?' in *Vrai et faux dans la Grande Guerre*, ed. C. PROCHASSON and A. RASMUSSEN, 96-111 (Paris: La Découverte, 2004); Gerhard PAUL, *Bilder des Krieges, Krieg der Bilder. Die Visualisierung des modernen Krieges* (Paderborn-Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh-Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2004), 103-171; and by same author, *Visual History. Ein Studienbuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); and Stéphane AUDOIN-ROUZEAU, *Combattre. Une anthropologie historique de la guerre moderne (XIXe-XXIe siècle)* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2008), 99-145.
81. See Anon., *Kriegsbilder*, s.l., 1 Garde-Reserve-Division, 1917; Konrad ESCHER, *Kunst, Krieg und Krieger. Zur Geschichte der Kriegsdarstellungen* (Zürich-Leipzig: Rascher, 1917); Anon., *War Pictures. Issued by Authority of the Imperial War Museum* (London: Walter Judd, 1919).
82. A. WARBURG, 'Mnemosyne (introduction),' *Trafic*, no. 9, 1994: 39-40.
83. See Ralph WINKLE, 'Masse und Magie. Anmerkungen zu einem Interpretament der Aberglaubensforschung während des Ersten Weltkriegs,' in *Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. KORFF (note 46), 261-99.
84. See Georges BATAILLE, *La Sociologie sacrée du monde contemporain*, ed. Simonetta FALASCA ZAMPONI (Paris: Éditions Lignes & Manifestes, 2004); Roger CAILLOIS, *Quatre essais de sociologie contemporaine* (Paris: Olivier Perrin Éditeur, 1951), 75-153; G. DIDI-HUBERMAN, *La Ressemblance informe* (note 5), 31-164; Denis HOLLIER, ed., *Le Collège de sociologie, 1937-1939* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 403-59, 494-501, and 607-40.
85. See Ernst H. KANTOROWICZ, 'Mourir pour la patrie (*Pro Patria Mori*) dans la pensée politique médiévale,' *Mourir pour la patrie et autres textes* (Paris: PUF, 1984), 105-41; Georges DUMÉZIL, *Heur et malheur du guerrier. Aspects mythiques de la fonction guerrière chez les Indo-Européens* (Paris: PUF, 1969 [republished Paris, Flammarion, 1996]); Franco CARDINI, *La Culture de la guerre, Xe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992).
86. See A. PROST and J. WINTER, *Penser la Grande Guerre* (note 31), 209-33; J.-J. BECKER, ed., *Histoire culturelle de la Grande Guerre* (note 31); S. AUDOIN-ROUZEAU, *Combattre* (note 80).
87. See Mario ISNENGHI, *Il mito della grande guerra* (Bologna: Società Editrice Il Mulino, 1989 [1997]), 179-260.
88. See John HORNE and A. KRAMER, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2001); Olivier FORCADE, 'Information, censure et propagande,' in *Encyclopédie de la Grande Guerre 1914-1918. Histoire et culture*, ed. S. AUDOIN-ROUZEAU and J.-J. BECKER, 451-64 (Paris: Bayard, 2004); C. PROCHASSON, 1914-1918. *Retours d'expériences* (note 33), 13-14 and 69-121.
89. See C. PROCHASSON and A. RASMUSSEN, ed., *Vrai et faux ...* (note 80), 9-32.

90. Waldemar DEONNA, 'La recrudescence des superstitions en temps de guerre et les statues à clous,' *L'Anthropologie*, 27, 1916: 243–68; Yves de LA BRIÈRE, *Le Destin de l'Empire allemand et les oracles prophétiques. Essai de critique historique* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1916).
91. Guillaume APOLLINAIRE, 'Superstitions de guerre,' *Œuvres en prose complètes, II*, ed. Pierre CAIZERGUES and Michel DÉCAUDIN (Paris: Gallimard, 1993), 492; L. ROURE, 'Superstitions du front de guerre,' *Études*, 152, 1917: 708–32.
92. Albert DAUZAT, *Légendes, prophéties et superstitions de la Guerre* (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 1918), 7.
93. See Ludwig Fritz HABER, *The Poisonous Cloud: Chemical Warfare in the First World War* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Olivier LEPICK, *La Grande Guerre chimique: 1914–1918* (Paris: PUF, 1998); A. BECKER, 'La guerre des gaz entre tragédie, rumeur, mémoire et oubli,' in *Vrai et faux ...*, ed. C. PROCHASSON and A. RASMUSSEN (note 80), 257–76.
94. Sigmund FREUD, *Conférences d'introduction à la psychanalyse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), 431–53.
95. W. BENJAMIN, 'Les armes de demain. Batailles au chloracétophérol, au chlorure de diphénylarsine et au sulfure d'éthyle dichloré,' *Romantisme et critique de la civilisation* (Paris: Payot & Rivages, 2010), 107–111.
96. A. WARBURG, *Mnemosyne. Grundbegriffe II* (note 16), 3 (dated July 2, 1929).
97. See G. KORFF, 'In Zeichen des Saturn. Vorläufige Notizen zu Warburgs Aberglaubensforschung im Ersten Weltkrieg,' in *Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. Korff (note 46), 181–213.
98. Claudia SCHLAGER, 'Seherinnen und Seismographen. Ausschnittshaftes zur Trouvaille "Barbara Weigand" aus Aby Warburgs Kriegskartothek,' in *Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. KORFF (note 46), 215–43. See A. BECKER, *La Guerre et la foi. De la mort à la mémoire, 1914–1930* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1994), 15–55 and 103–38; J. WINTER, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 25–38 and 67–91. On Claire Ferchaud: Claire FERCHAUD, *Notes autobiographiques, II. Mission nationale* (Paris: Librairie Pierre Téqui, 1974); Claude MOUTON, *Au plus fort de la tourmente... Claire Ferchaud* (Montsur: Éditions Résiac, 1978 [1983]).
99. A. WARBURG, 'La divination païenne et antique dans les écrits et les images à l'époque de Luther,' *Essais florentins* (Paris: Klicksiek, 1990), 245–94. See Claudia WEDEPOHL "Agitationsmittel für die Bearbeitung der Ungelehrten." Warburgs Reformationsstudien zwischen Kriegsbeobachtung historisch-kritischer Forschung und Verfolgungswahn,' in *Aby Warburg und der Aberglaube im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. G. KORFF (note 46), 325–68.
100. Émile BENVENISTE, *Le Vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1969), II, p. 276.
101. *Ibid.*, 276–79.

---

## ABSTRACTS

This article deals with a particular aspect of the genesis of the *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* composed by Aby Warburg between 1927 and 1929. It has to do with his reaction to the events of the Great War, a reaction which is at the same time 'pathetic' (even 'pathological') and 'epistemic' (that is to say methodological). If the history of culture amounts, for Warburg, to a great 'psychomachia'



of the *astra* and the *monstra*, as he said, then it seems evident that the war for him was a direct test of his 'science of culture' (*Kulturwissenschaft*). It is no surprise that between 1914 and 1918 Warburg created a large iconographic collection of the war whose theoretical foundations I wish here to examine by comparing it with the efforts of his contemporaries in Germany and France (notably in the work of Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch).

## AUTHORS

### GEORGES DIDI-HUBERMAN

Georges Didi-Huberman, philosopher and art historian, teaches at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. He has been the curator of numerous exhibitions, notably at the Georges Pompidou Centre (Paris), and more recently at the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid and the ZKM in Karlsruhe. He has published some thirty works on the history and theory of images. Recent publications include: *L'Image ouverte* (Gallimard, 2007); *La Ressemblance par contact. Archéologie, anachronisme et modernité de l'empreinte* (Minuit, 2008); *Quand les images prennent position. L'œil de l'histoire, 1* (Minuit, 2009); *Survivance des lucioles* (Minuit, 2009); *Remontages du temps subi. L'œil de l'histoire, 2* (Minuit, 2010); *Atlas. How to Carry the World on One's Back ?* (Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2010).